

was under observation corresponded with the changing position of the earth in her annual course around the sun, and the suggestion came to him that the apparent variation in the motion of the satellite was due, not to any actual variation on its part, but to the difference in time occupied by the light from the satellite in travelling to the earth, according as the earth was near to Jupiter, or far from it. Here was a clue to a great discovery — no less than the discovery of the velocity of light, with which Romer's name is now indissolubly connected.

The first thing, then, to do with a failure is to find out the reason of it. In this matter men may sometimes learn from boys. Readers of *Tom Brown's School Days* will remember how Tom gained his skill in wrestling. It was in the school of hard experience. Tom was at first a poor wrestler, and had to work his way up from the very bottom, but after every fall he set himself to find out the particular thrust or trip that had sent him on his back, and when he was apparently foiled he did not give up, but "thought about that fall at his meals, in his walks, when he lay awake in bed, in his dreams." Such study of one's failures can never be fruitless, but, unfortunately, such study is not so common as it ought to be. Not many days ago a lady, whose work of years had been overthrown by lack of ordinary caution, said to a visitor: "I will never try again. I tried my best and failed, and now I have decided just to take life as it comes and enjoy it as well as I can." The lady spoke as if she were proud of the new worldly wisdom which she had gained from her recent experience; to the hearer her words sounded rather like worldly foolishness. It was as if a sea-captain, who, after years of skilful seamanship, had been driven on the rocks, should say: "I tried my best for twenty years

to keep my ship afloat, and she went on the rocks at last. And, now, that I am sailing again, I intend just to take my ease. What is the use of trying to stop a leak now, when I was wrecked once before?" No sane captain would talk in such a way. On the contrary, if his ship struck on a hidden rock, his first impulse, after he had done his best for the safety of the ship, and the men she carried, would be to mark the cause of his disaster, and to put down the rock upon his chart, so that neither he nor others would ever strike there again.

There is little use in studying the causes of one's failures, if one is not willing to apply the lessons which he learns from that study. There is many a man to-day who knows that the partial wreck which has come upon his life is due to indulgence in stimulants or opiates, to social dissipation, to gambling, or to reckless and guilty operations on the stock exchange. But the number of those who have learned so much is far greater than the number of those who are willing to act upon the warning involved in that knowledge. "When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again," is the cry of multitudes who wait only for the renewal of former opportunities that they may renew their old disastrous course. Knowledge of peril alone will never save, any more than the danger-signal will save the skater who disregards its friendly warning and pushes on to the thin ice.

To learn and to apply the lessons of failure is to gather the materials of victory out of defeat. It has been said that Russia owes much of her present strength to former disaster. She has been defeated often, but she never has been defeated without learning the lesson of defeat, and doing her best to make similar failure impossible in the future. That is the secret of Russia's strength. She never